

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO RUDTC/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0000

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS STATE 299527

FOLLOWING REPEAT ADDIS ABABA 6851 SENT ACTION NAIROBI SECSTATE
INFO CAIRO DJIBOUTI KHARTOUM MOGADISCIO DEC 14.
QUOTE UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 6851

NAIROBI PLEASE PASS USIS FOR RELEASE TO LOCAL PRESS AND IN-
TERNATIONAL WIRE SERVICES.

DEPT PLEASE PASS CONGRESSMAN BONKER'S OFFICE, RM. 1529 LONG-
WORTH BLDG.; CONGRESSMAN TSONGAS' OFFICE, RM. 217 CANNON BLDG.
AND FOLLOWING NEWSPAPERS: BOSTON GLOBE, BOSTON HERALD AMERI-
CAN, LOWELL SUN (MASS), LAWRENCE EAGLE-TRIBUNE (MASS), WASH-
INGTON POST, WASHINGTON STAR, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, WALL
STREET JOURNAL, NEW YORK TIMES, SEATTLE TIMES, SEATTLE POST-
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INTELLIGENCE, TIME, NEWSWEEK, US NEWS & WORLD REPORT.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OREP (CODEL TSONGAS AND BONKER), ET, US

SUBJECT: PRESS RELEASE OF CODEL TSONGAS/BONKER FOLLOWING
MEETING WITH PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU

REF: ADDIS ABABA 6844

1. FOLLOWING IS VERBATIM TEXT PRESS RELEASE OF CODEL TSONGAS/
BONKER:

2. BEGIN TEXT ADDIS ABABA, DECEMBER 14, 1977. LT. COL.
MENGISTU HAILE-MARIAM, CHAIRMAN OF THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (PMAC) OF ETHIOPIA, YESTERDAY ASSURED
TWO VISITING UNITED STATES CONGRESSMEN THAT "IT IS NOT OUR
OBJECTIVE TO CROSS OUR BORDERS ONCE WE HAVE THROWN THE SOMALIS
OUT OF ETHIOPIA. WE DO NOT INTEND TO REPEAT THE SAME MISTAKE
AS THE SOMALIS."

THE PRECEDENT-SETTING MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES PAUL E.
TSONGAS (D-MASS.) AND DON BONKER (D-WASHINGTON) WAS THE FIRST
ENCOUNTER BETWEEN CHAIRMAN MENGISTU AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

THE 75-MINUTE FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ALSO INVOLVED RICHARD
MATHERON, U.S. CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN ETHIOPIA AND BRYANT
SALTER, CONTROL OFFICER WITH THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT. OTHER
HIGH-LEVEL ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS ATTENDING THE MEETING WERE
BERHANE BAYEH, PMAC MEMBER IN CHARGE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS, AND
ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER BERHANU DINKA. IN ADDITION, CHAIRMAN
MENGISTU STATED ETHIOPIA PURSUES A "POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT"
AND WAS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO "PEACE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE."

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THE TWO SECOND-TERM CONGRESSMEN ARE IN ETHIOPIA AS PART OF A
FACT-FINDING TOUR OF THE HORN OF AFRICA TO GAIN A BETTER UNDER-
STANDING OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AREA. RELATIONS BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES AND ETHIOPIA HAVE DETERIORATED SINCE THE 1974
REVOLUTION.

"WE ARE IMPRESSED WITH CHAIRMAN MENGISTU'S CONCERN FOR HIS
COUNTRY, HIS INTELLIGENCE, AND HIS COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE
CONDITIONS FOR THE RURAL FARMERS OF ETHIOPIA. WHILE THERE ARE SOME
SERIOUS DIFFERENCES OF POLICY BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS,
WE ARE ENCOURAGED THAT THIS KIND OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION WILL
RESOLVE THOSE DIFFERENCES OVER A PERIOD OF TIME," THE CON-
GRESSMEN SAID.

REPRESENTATIVE TSONGAS ASKED FOR AN EXPLANATION ABOUT THE LEVEL
OF VIOLENCE IN ADDIS ABABA AND THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
GENERALLY. CHAIRMAN MENGISTU EXPLAINED TO THE CONGRESSMEN THAT
"A STRUGGLE IS GOING ON AT EVERY LEVEL BETWEEN THOSE WHO WOULD
LIKE TO SEE THE OLD ORDER REINSTITUTED AND THOSE WHO ARE DETER-
MINED TO PROTECT THE REVOLUTION." HE ADDED THAT THE "INTENT AND
THE OBJECTIVE OF THE REVOLUTION HAVE BEEN AND REMAIN THE
RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO THE GREATEST MAJORITY OF THE

ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE." CHAIRMAN MENGISTU VOICED HIS GOVERNMENT'S IRRITATION THAT SEVERAL COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES, NEVER CRITICIZED THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY OF FORMER EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE, WHO HE FELT HAD SEVERELY OPPRESSED THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA.

REPRESENTATIVE BONKER SAID HE HOPED THE OAU COULD BRING ABOUT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT IN THE OGADEN REGION, BUT THE CHAIRMAN SAID THAT THE OAU DID NOT HAVE THE MILITARY CAPABILITY TO IMPLEMENT ITS DECISION REGARDING THE CONFLICT.

"THE GAP BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES IS WIDE," BONKER AND TSONGAS CONCLUDED, "BUT PERHAPS THIS MEETING MAY BE THE FIRST STEP IN NARROWING IT."

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THE THREE-DAY STAY IN ETHIOPIA ALSO SAW THE CONGRESSMEN MEETING WITH SEVERAL OTHER HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS THE FIRST RETURN TRIP TO WOLLISO BY TSONGAS WHO SERVED AS A PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER FROM 1962 TO 1964. THE CONGRESSMEN'S TRIP WILL INCLUDE VISITS TO KENYA, SOMALIA, AND SUDAN. END TEXT PRESS RELEASE.

3. PHOTOGRAPHS OF MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN MENGISTU WILL FOLLOW.

4. ABOVE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.
MATHERSON UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING CHAIRMAN, PRESS RELEASES, CODELS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE299527
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/E:KPGARLAND
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770469-0289
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Message ID: 86ac4c02-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Reference: 77 ADDIS ABABA 6844
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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SAS ID: 203696
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS RELEASE OF CODEL TSONGAS/BONKER FOLLOWING MEETING WITH PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU
TAGS: SOPN, OREP, ET, US, (TSONGAS, PAUL E), (BONKER, DON L)
To: LONDON ROME MULTIPLE
Type: TE
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